

Ceramic Terrace Houses

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These ceramic works were created in the class of specialist Art teacher Petra Glaser.

This series of ceramic terraced houses were created by Year 5 and 6 students of Petra Glaser at Cranbourne – Carlisle Primary School. The students were investigating the Gold Rush in Australia in the 1800's. Linking with their classroom programme of inquiry, the students' visual art lessons involved careful observations of the types of housing in the cities of Sydney and Melbourne during this boom period.

Discussions that emanated from these observations showed that the students were keen to explore aspects such as the small size of the houses in comparison to contemporary estate housing and why people lived in close proximity to cities with reference to transport and commerce. We discussed the styles, decorative elements, whether the houses were one or two stories and considered the Melbourne suburbs in which they could be located. It was also timely that 'The Block' television series ran in Australia congruently with the making of the Terrace Houses!

The students prepared several preliminary drawings of terrace houses and it became apparent that their 'architectural' knowledge was enhanced due to such detail within their plans. Each student was given a slab of either buff raku or white hand-building clay with which to create their house. Techniques of construction involved the cutting of the upper shape

of roofing, incising lines, imprinting with found objects, and adding excess clay via slip and scoring.

Oxides were then applied to the grooves after the first bisque firing, followed by some Cesco cracklene gold glaze in the window cavities. Following the glaze firing, the students then applied shimmer paints over the raised patterned and textured areas, in order to allow the oxides to peep through. Several different painting applications were practiced in order to create such effects, resulting in some very impressive and striking terrace houses that the students will treasure for a very long time.

Petra Glaser (Visual Art teacher)

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